

## Just one bottle:



### **Can reduce the protective affect of breastfeeding**

The first milk, colostrum, 'paints' the baby's stomach, which provides a barrier to keep out infections. Giving water or formula can 'wash-off' that protection.

### **Can overfill your baby's stomach**

Colostrum comes in small amounts because your baby's stomach is very small at birth. Adding a top-up bottle can stretch baby's stomach. He doesn't feel full after the next breastfeed and so is unsettled, thus encouraging another top-up.

### **Can reduce your milk supply**

If the baby is full of water or formula, then he will not want to suck at the breast. This may cause your breasts to become overfull and sore. Less sucking at the breast means less milk is produced for the next feed.

### **Can confuse the way the baby sucks**

Sucking a bottle teat and a breast are different. If a baby gets used to the easy flow of the teat, he may find it harder to learn to work at getting milk from the breast. This confusion may also result in sore nipples.

### **Can expose the baby to possible allergens**

Eczema and asthma are more common in children who receive formula feeds. Early introduction of cow's milk formula may also increase the risk of diabetes where there is a family history of this disease.

### **Can reduce your confidence**

If a bottle is seen as the solution every time the baby is unsettled, this means you are not learning other ways of settling your baby. The early days are a time of building your confidence as you learn how to meet your baby's needs by breastfeeding, cuddling, rocking and other comforting skills.

### **Can make the situation worse**

Giving a supplement or 'top-up' to a breastfeeding baby may cause problems. Consider if there is another way of dealing with the solution.

*Sometimes a baby may need a supplement for a medical reason. If this is the case, ask your doctor or midwife to explain the reason to you.*